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# DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

# NEWSLETTER

## 2016-17/FALL 2016/VOLUME 17

## Greetings from the Chair

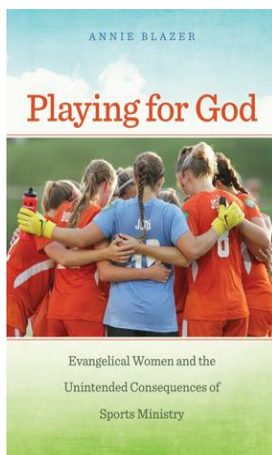
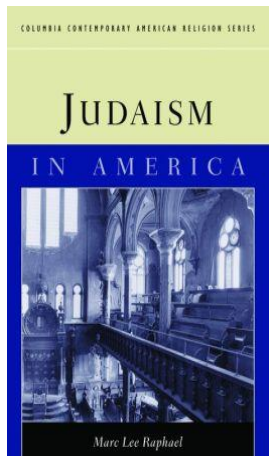
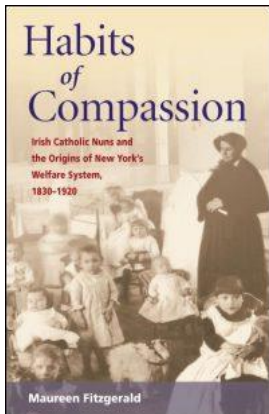
2016 has been another action-packed year in Religious Studies, as we welcome new faculty, expand our curriculum, and advance research in the role of religion worldwide. This fall, Oludamini Ogunnaike joined the faculty as our new Islamic Studies professor, coming to William and Mary after completing his Ph.D. at Harvard University and a post-doc at Stanford. Prof. Ogunnaike specializes in the study of Islam in West Africa and will expand our course offerings in both Islam and African Religions. He is already teaching a new course, “What is Love? Reflections on Love in the Islamic Tradition.” In his first weeks at the College, Prof. Ogunnaike acquired for Swem Library a rare, 19<sup>th</sup> century [Quran manuscript](#).

Resulting from our once-a-decade program review, Religious Studies was also able to offer long-term teaching positions to two colleagues who might already be familiar to you. Mark McLaughlin came to William and Mary in 2013, after graduate school at the University of California Santa Barbara and a year of teaching at Denison University. He has taught a range of courses on Hinduism and South Asian Religions and is presently teaching a new “Big Ideas” course, “Meditation and the Mind,” which explores intersections between classical Asian contemplative practices and cognitive science. Mary (Maggie) Fraser Kirsh (W&M 2002) has taught courses in Judaic Studies since 2007. She now holds an appointment in the interdisciplinary Judaic Studies Program and will teach courses in our department and in History. Along with our survey course on Jewish Thought, she is presently teaching a Freshman Seminar, “Writing the Self: An Exploration of Jewish History Through Memoirs and Autobiographies.”

Religious Studies continues to play a key role in the new College curriculum. In addition to the “Big Ideas” and writing seminars, both aimed at freshmen, a number of our courses accomplish the 200-level mandate of promoting interdisciplinary study. In fact, Annie Blazer has been honored as one of William and Mary’s first W. Taylor Reveley III [Interdisciplinary Fellows](#). Funded by a grant from the Mellon Foundation—honoring President Reveley’s service to their board—the fellowship will enable Prof. Blazer to work with a political scientist on the development of a research-based course on how Americans signal their religious and political affiliations.

Kevin Vose  
Chair, Religious Studies Department

## Faculty Publications



## Faculty Changes

On Leave Academic Year 2016-2017

**Julie Galambush**

Visiting Faculty, 2016-2017

**Robin McCall:** PhD, Princeton Theological Seminary; teaching History and Religion of Ancient Israel (F'16, S'17), Fr Sem: Sympathy for the Devil (F'16), Reading the Bible Hebrew I (F'16), Torah (S'17), and Readings In Biblical Hebrew (S'17).

## Faculty News

**Alexander Angelov:** Upon his return as a Kingdon Fellow at the University of Wisconsin, Prof. Angelov resumed his teaching and work with students. He introduced a new course on Eastern Christianity to the College's curriculum and was pleased to find out how much students enjoyed it. Besides the usual invited lectures and academic conferences, Prof. Angelov served as a board member of the Byzantine Studies Association of North America and had the opportunity to guide graduate students in their work. At the College, he joined the advisory board at the Institute for Pilgrimage Studies where he has assisted in organizing the annual conference and chaired a session. It has been an eventful year, but Prof. Angelov is looking forward to the new and better 2017.

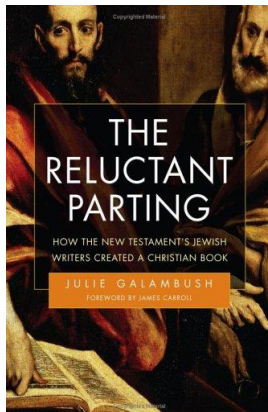
**Annie Blazer:** Professor Blazer's book, *Playing for God: Evangelical Women and the Unintended Consequences of Sports Ministry*, was released in Summer of 2015 by NYU Press. Professor Blazer has been interviewed about her book by two podcasts, "New Books in Christian Studies" and "Marginalia: First Impressions." She also presented her research at the International Society of Media, Religion, and Culture's conference in Seoul, Korea in Summer 2016. In the religious studies department, Professor Blazer has developed a new course, New Religious Movements in America, and will be offering this course online for the first time in Summer 2017.

**Patton Burchett:** This past year, in his first year at William & Mary, Patton Burchett taught "Introduction to Hinduism," "Yoga and Tantra," and "Magic, Science, and Religion." He has thoroughly enjoyed settling in to life in his new home in Williamsburg, getting to know the other members of the department, and teaching the fantastic students at William & Mary. In the Fall, he attended and presented papers at both the Annual Conference on South Asia in Madison, Wisconsin (October '15) and the Conference of the American Academy of Religion in Atlanta, GA (November '16). In the Spring, he organized the visit to campus of Dr. James Mallinson (SOAS, University of London), arguably the world's premiere scholar of *hatha yoga*. Dr. Mallinson met with students and gave an extremely well-attended public lecture entitled "An Illustrated History of Yoga." This year Patton published an article, "Agradas and the Ram-Rasik Bhakti Community: The Politics of Remembrance and the Authority of the Hindu Saint," in the *International Journal of Hindu Studies* as well as an online piece, "Yoga in Theory and Practice: Pedagogical Strategies," for the *Religious Studies News'* series *Spotlight on Teaching*. Patton's summer centered on the birth of his second daughter, Catherine (Cate). When not changing diapers or losing sleep, he worked diligently over the summer on the manuscript for his first book, *Bhakti Religion and Tantric Magic: Poets, Yogis, and Sufis in Mughal India*. This November he sent the full manuscript off to editors for review. With a bit of luck, perhaps by next year's newsletter it will be officially "forthcoming," or perhaps even published.

## Faculty Publications

## Faculty News Continued

**Julie Galambush:** Julie Galambush is spending her sabbatical as a Visiting Scholar at Cornell, and as of mid-November, officially snowbound.

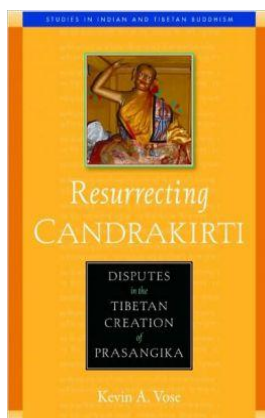
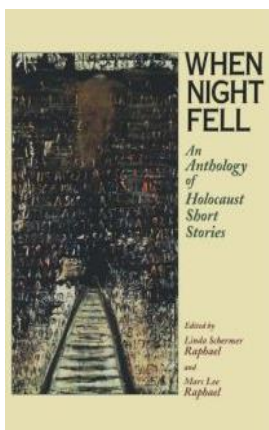


**Maggie Fraser Kirsh:** Maggie Fraser Kirsh contributed to *The Young Victims of the Nazi Regime: Migration, the Holocaust, and Postwar Displacement* (Bloomsbury, 2016). Her chapter explores the memory and identity of Jewish children hidden as Catholics in World War II France. She traveled to Dachau in the summer of 2016 to present a paper entitled “‘Shattered by Mental and Physical Strain’: The Treatment and Assimilation of ‘Defective’ Child Survivors.” This talk was part of a conference, hosted by the International Tracing Service, that highlighted new approaches in education and research related to displaced persons in the aftermath of World War II. In addition to offering a Freshman Seminar on gender and Judaism, she mentored a spring break trip to Poland and taught Introduction to the History of Jewish Thought and The Holocaust during the summer sessions. In between teaching, writing, and traveling, Maggie, her husband Russell, and daughter Rachel welcomed baby Jonathan Henry Fraser to the family in September 2015.

**Mark McLaughlin:** This past year, Mark published a chapter in the edited volume *Hagiography in Abrahamic and Dharmic Traditions* with Bloomsbury Academic. The chapter, titled “Turning Tomb to Temple: Hagiography, Sacred Space, and Ritual Activity in a Thirteenth-Century Hindu Shrine,” demonstrates that hagiography can have a continual impact on the historical development of a sacred space and its ritual activity. Mark recently developed a new freshman seminar that reaches across the campus, drawing together the humanities and the hard sciences. This course, called ‘Meditation and the Mind,’ brings together religious studies methodologies of primary source interrogation with neuroscience methodologies of scientific inquiry coupled with experiential learning. The course surveys recent neuroscientific research on cognitive, affective, and neurophysiological effects of meditation, and reads them against select South Asian meditation texts grounded in either Buddhist or Hindu ontologies of self. It fulfills a freshman seminar requirement meant to introduce students to the liberal arts curriculum by exploring big ideas, in this case, “What is mind and what is self?” In addition, the course was designed to integrate with the Campus Wellness Center’s initiative concerned with student wellbeing. Due to this initiative, the College of William and Mary was the recent recipient of the Annual Williamsburg Health Foundation Award, in which this course was highlighted.

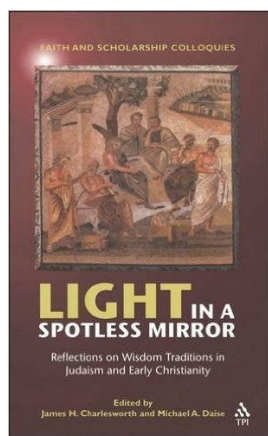
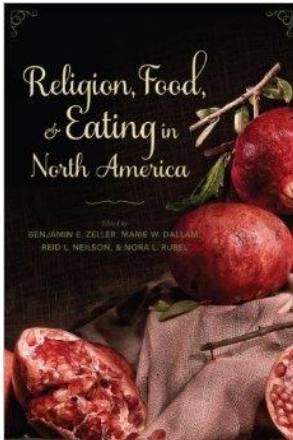
Lastly, for his seminar entitled “Temples, Tombs, and Topography: A Comparative Survey of Sacred Space in South Asia,” Mark has been experimenting with bringing 360° virtual reality technology into the classroom through crowd sourcing still images of sacred spaces in India and accessing them with students through Google Cardboard. He is in the process of securing funds to acquire a 360° video camera, as well as securing funding to travel to India next summer to record the spatial layout of select sacred spaces and the ritual activities taking place there. He will then produce classroom content from the video data that would allow professors to immerse their students in virtual spatial reality in order to witness real time ritual activities of various sacred spaces in an array of religious traditions, thus expanding our capacity for experiential education of distant cultural contexts.

**Marc Lee Raphael:** Marc Lee Raphael, the Nathan and Sophia Gumenick Professor of Judaic Studies and Professor of Religious Studies, continued as Director of the Program in Judaic Studies and, during the summer of 2016, directed the W&M Summer Study in Prague program. During 2015-16 he introduced two new courses, Narrative Theory: the Prophetic Books, and Leonard Cohen and Scriptures.





## Faculty Publications



## Faculty News Continued

**Faraz Sheikh:** Faraz was awarded the Summer Research Grant by the College for Summer 2016. Using these funds, he travelled to Turkey to study Arabic and Islamic texts with a Syrian scholar at the Institute of Medical Humanities in Istanbul. He is now finalizing his first article about selfhood and ethical formation in the early Islamic tradition. Faraz is also working on a second project tentatively titled “Religious and Moral subjectivity in Punjabi Sufi Poetry”. He is currently studying the full corpus of the punjabi Sufis (Farid Gunj Shakar, Sultan Bahu, Shah Hussain, Bulleh Shah and Khwaja Farid) in the original language (yup, you guessed it, Punjabi!) over Skype video chat with an independent scholar and researcher from Lahore, Pakistan. In terms of teaching, Faraz developed two new courses for the religious studies department in 2016 namely, Ethical Formation in Comparative Perspective and Muslim Ethics. He also arranged the annual Hans Tiefel lecture in Religion and Ethics and was able to have renowned religious ethicist, Prof. Richard Miller, visit the College from University of Chicago Divinity School to deliver the well-attended and well-liked lecture “Medicine, Religion and the perilous care of Children”. Faraz also delivered some invited lectures. He spoke at the Virginia Commonwealth University about “Church and State in the Islamic tradition” and at Miami University, Oxford Ohio about “The role of Fear and Hope in the religious life”. He attended the AAR this year and plans to attend to the annual conference for the Society for the Study of Muslim Ethics in New Orleans in January 2017. He will teach a COLL 300 (Muslim Ethics) and Religion and Ethics in 2017-2018. Faraz has been invited to teach Intro to Religion and Intro to Ethics courses at the summer program of AUIC in Seoul Korea. In the summer of 2017, he is planning to travel to Malaysia to study Arabic as well as the works of the self-exiled Pakistani scholar and ethical thinker, Javed Ahmed Ghamdi, who now lives in Malaysia. This research will culminate in a research article that analyzes the contributions of Ghamdi to contemporary Muslim ethical discourse.

**Kevin Vose:** After his first year of chairing the department, Kevin Vose spent the summer presenting aspects of his research on Indian and Tibetan Buddhist philosophy in South Korea and Norway. With four other professors from the U.S. and Japan, he participated in a two-day workshop at Geumgang University in Nonsan, South Korea, introducing students and faculty there to the Tibetan Madhyamaka tradition. He then traveled to Bergen, Norway to participate in the 14<sup>th</sup> Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies. At this weeklong gathering of the world’s Tibet specialists, he gave a presentation on the relationship between Buddhist logic and the conclusions Buddhists attempt to prove with it. He also tried to adapt to the endless daylight of Nordic summer.

## Spotlight on New Faculty

**Oludamini Ogunnaike:** Oludamini Ogunnaike joined the Religious Studies Department in the Fall of 2016. This Fall he taught “Introduction to Islam” and “What is Love?: Reflections from the Islamic Tradition.” Next year, he will also be offering classes on Islamic Art and the Yoruba religious traditions of West Africa and the diaspora.

Professor Ogunnaike, his wife Naseemah, and their newborn son Jibril moved to Williamsburg this summer from California, where Oludamini was a postdoctoral fellow at Stanford University. Before that, he completed his doctoral work at Harvard University’s departments of African and African American Studies and Religion. He also received his A.B. from Harvard, where he majored in Cognitive Neuroscience and African Studies.

## New Faculty Continued

Professor Ogunnaike's research examines the philosophical dimensions of postcolonial, colonial, and pre-colonial Islamic and indigenous religious traditions of West and North Africa, especially Sufism and Iifa. He is currently working on a book entitled, *Sufism and Iifa: Ways of Knowing in Two West African Intellectual Traditions* and maintains a digital archive of [West African Sufi poetry](#).

This fall, Professor Ogunnaike won the triannual Young Writers' Award from the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society for his article on the influential Islamic thinker Ibn 'Arabi and the problem of pure consciousness. He also wrote an article on the Sufi practice of mystical union with the Prophet accepted for publication in *The Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies* and authored a chapter on the Muslim historian and thinker Ibn Khaldun, known as the "Father of the Social Sciences," in *Global Africa*, forthcoming with University of California Press. This fall, he also published an article on the role of the decline of religion in the rise of modern racism in the journals *Open Theology* and *Religious Theory*.

Professor Ogunnaike presented papers on Islamic and African Philosophy at the annual meeting of African Studies' Association and at the University of Bayreuth this fall. He also presented a paper at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Antonio analyzing the persistence of colonial myths about African Islam. Professor Ogunnaike has also been working on collecting and translating the work of Shaykh Dan Tafa, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Nigerian Islamic philosopher, historian, Sufi, and intellectual, and will present his findings at a conference at Harvard in the Spring.

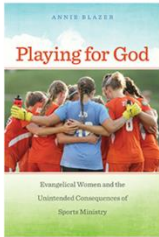
Professor Ogunnaike will be on paternity leave for the spring semester as his wife, Naseemah, returns to Oxford to continue her PhD research. The Ogunnaike family are grateful for the warm welcome they've received at the College in general and the Department of Religious Studies in particular.

## New Initiatives

This year the Department formed a new Programming Committee (consisting of junior faculty members **Patton Burchett**, **Alex Angelov**, and **Faraz Sheikh**) with the intention of (1) bringing together faculty and students for informal discussions (outside of the classroom) about ongoing faculty and student research on religion, and (2) bridging departmental boundaries and increasing interdisciplinary conversations and collaborations on religion-related topics among W&M faculty. The committee organized an annual speaker series, which consists of two brown-bag lunch events each semester and one "keynote" speaker each academic year. Our model will have department faculty members discuss their research at two of the four lunch events each year; at one event, a W&M faculty member outside of our department will present on their work; and at the final event, senior Religious Studies majors will present their honors thesis projects.

At our first lunch talk this Fall, Annie Blazer discussed her recent book *Playing for God: Evangelical Women and the Unintended Consequences of Sports Ministry*. At the second lunch event, Prof. Barbetta Spaeth of the Classics Department gave a talk entitled "Cult, Memory, and Identity in Roman Corinth." For this year's keynote speaker, in mid-October we welcomed Dr. Brantley Gasaway (W&M '96, now chair of Religious Studies at Bucknell University), who gave a lecture entitled "Beyond Belief? 'The End of White Christian America' and the Role of Religion in the 2016 Presidential Election." Prof. Gasaway examined the historical role of the religious right and its continued influence in contemporary American politics. All three events were very well attended, engaging students and faculty from around the College. We have every intention of continuing with this speaker series in the future. At present, the series's main obstacle is financial, and so the Programming Committee plans to seek out funding sources in order to be able to bring in prestigious keynote speakers and to cater an annual department reception for faculty and majors centered around the keynote speaker's visit and lecture.


"Sports, Pleasure, and Pain: Christian Athletes in America"




Dr. Annie Blazer  
Wren 315  
Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>  
12:00-1:30

"Cult, Memory, and Identity in Roman Corinth"

Prof. Barbetta Spaeth  
Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup>  
12:00-1:30pm  
Wren Building 2 (boardroom classroom)



Beyond Belief?  
"The End of White Christian America" and the Role of Religion in the 2016 Presidential Election



a lecture by  
Dr. Brantley W. Gasaway  
Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at Bucknell University  
& Author of *Progressive Evangelicals and the Persecution of Social Justice* (2014)

Blow Hall 332  
Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>  
4:30-5:30pm

## Lectures

Thanks to the generous donations from our friends and alumni\*, the department is able to sponsor lecture series and host events for our concentrators. Here are highlights from our 2015/16 schedule:

**10/15/15: Lisa Leff**, Assoc Professor, American Univ., DC, **“The Political Meaning and Cultural Crisis of Emancipation”**

**10/20-22/15: Samuel Meier**, Professor, Ohio State Univ., **Four lectures on Ancient Israel.**

**10/20/15: Michelle Engert**, JD, Scholar in Residence, American Univ., DC, **“Bob Dylan’s Road to Salvation”**

**11/3/15: Maggie Kirsh**, W&M '02, PhD, Univ. of Wisconsin, **“Haskalah: Tradition and Change in Eastern Europe”**

**11/5/15: Maggie Kirsh**, **“The Zionist Revolt against the Jewish Past”**

**11/10/15: David Katz**, Rabbi, Temple Bethel, VA, **“Varieties of Zionist Ideology: Mohilever and Gordon”**

**11/17/15: Daniel Zemel**, Rabbi, Temple Micah, DC, **“Reform Judaic Thought Today”**

**11/24/15: Jeffrey Gurock**, Professor, Yeshiva Univ., NY, **“Orthodox Judaic Thought Today”**

**12/4/15: Maggie Kirsh**, W&M '02, PhD, Univ. of Wisconsin, **“Jewish-Christian-Jewish: Religious Identity and the Hidden Children of the Holocaust in France”**

**1/29/16: James Mallinson**, PhD, SOAS, University of London, **“An Illustrated History of Yoga”**

**2/1-5/16: Barbara Porter**, PhD, Harvard Semitic Museum, MA, **Five lectures on Ancient Mesopotamia.**

**2/16/16: Maggie Kirsh**, W&M '02, PhD, Univ. of Wisconsin, **“Young Jewish Voices from Interwar Poland”**

**2/18/16: Mary Voigt**, Professor Emerita, W&M, **“Mesopotamian Religion”**

**3/16/16: Sara Lipton**, Professor, State Univ. of New York at Stony Brook, **THE DARK MIRROR”** book discussion.

**3/17/16: Patricia Heberer-Rice**, Historian, US Holocaust Memorial Museum, DC, **“German Physicians & Nazi Crimes”**

**3/24/16: Farideh Goldin**, Assist Professor, Old Dominion Univ., VA, **“Iranian Jewish Women”**

**3/29/16: Bennett F. Miller**, Rabbi, Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, NJ, **“Constructing a Theology after the Holocaust”**

**3/30/16: Margaret E. Mohrmann**, MD, PhD, Univ. of Virginia, **“Religious Ethics/Professional Ethics: Coherence and Conflict”**

**4/5/16: James Young**, Professor, Univ. of Massachusetts, **“Stages of Memory”**

**4/7/16: Monroe Pray**, MD, Bethesda, MD, **“Medicine, Science & the Nazi Genocide”**

**4/7/16: Lindsey Neimo**, W&M '14, MS, Walden Univ., MN. **“Nicene Creed”**

**4/8/16: Bryan Stone**, Professor, Del Mar College, TX, **“The Chosen Folks: Jews on the Frontiers of Texas”**

**4/19/16: Maggie Kirsh**, W&M '02, PhD, Univ. of Wisconsin, **“Children and Family in Holocaust Literature”**

**4/21/16: Katja Vehlow**, Professor, Univ. of South Carolina, **“Sexuality and Oral Law”**

**4/28/16: Maggie Kirsh**, W&M '02, PhD, Univ. of Wisconsin, **“The Landscape of Shoah Memory”**

**\*July 2015-June 2016 Donors:** J. Alembik; S. Allibhai-Mawani; M. Allison; D. Alpert; P. Bess; K. Bowerman; C. Bowles, IV; L. Boyer; P. Brockwell, Jr.; M. Bryne; C. Darnell; R. Davis; A. Dean; C. Dost; C&S Gorski; M. Guillaudeu; T. Harveycutter; C. Heaney; D. Hildebrand; K. Hill; C&A Jordan; M.&R. Kirsh; J. Low; A. Martien; T. Martin; K. Matteson; P&B McCulla; R. Miller; K&J Mondoro; J. Morgan; J. Morton, III; S. O’Mealia; S. Page; J.&D. Pierce; J&B Quanbeck; J. Schouten; L. Schray; M. Sims; M. Stachel; A. Sutton; D&K Turrieta; R. Tuttle; D. Wolcheck; D. Zimmerman

## Donor Opportunities

If you wish to support the Department of Religious Studies by contributing on-line to our operating funds, you can do so by visiting our website:

<http://www.wm.edu/as/religiousstudies/>

and clicking on “Support Religious Studies.” To contribute by mail, please make your check payable to Gift Accounting, The College of William and Mary, P.O. Box 1693, Williamsburg, VA 23187-1693 and write “For the Department of Religious Studies” in the memo area of your check. Your gift will enhance the kind of student-faculty engagement that makes Religious Studies a special place for our students.

## Religious Humor



“I downloaded them from a cloud.”



## Fall 2016 Courses

R.S. 100: Topic: Religion & Amer Youth	A. Blazer
R.S. 100: Topic: Meditation and the Mind	M. McLaughlin
R.S. 100: Topic: Meditation and the Mind	M. McLaughlin
R.S. 150: Topic: Writing the Self	M. Kirsh
R.S. 150: Topic: Sympathy for the Devil	R. McCall
R.S. 203: History & Religion of Ancient Israel	R. McCall
R.S. 204: Christian Origins	M. Daise
R.S. 205: Reading the Bible in Hebrew I	R. McCall
R.S. 210: Intro to Christianity	A. Angelov
R.S. 211: Intro to History of Jewish Thought	M. Kirsh
R.S. 212: Intro to Islam	O. Oludamini
R.S. 213: Intro to Hinduism	P. Burchett
R.S. 213: Intro to Hinduism	M. McLaughlin
R.S. 214: Intro to Buddhism	K. Vose
R.S. 221: Religion and Ethics	F. Sheikh
R.S. 304: Hebrew Prophets	M. Raphael
R.S. 308: Topic: Yoga & Tantra	P. Burchett
R.S. 308: Topic: Reflects on Love Islam Trad	O. Oludamini
R.S. 308: Topic: L. Cohen & Scripture	M. Raphael
R.S. 308: Topic: Muslim Ethics	F. Sheikh
R.S. 315: Judaism in Greco-Rmn World	M. Daise
R.S. 337: African Rit & Rel Practice	B. Weiss
R.S. 345: Religion, Colonization & Nationalism in N. Amer	M. Fitzgerald
R.S. 347: New Rel in America	A. Blazer
R.S. 349: Amer Immigration & Rel	M. Fitzgerald
R.S. 350: Eastern Christianity	A. Angelov

## Spring 2017 Courses

R.S. 100: Topic: Meditation and the Mind	M. McLaughlin
R.S. 150: Topic: Voice from the Holocaust	M. Kirsh
R.S. 150: Topic: Sex & God in America	M. Fitzgerald
R.S. 203: History & Religion of Ancient Israel	R. McCall
R.S. 204: Christian Origins	M. Daise
R.S. 210: Intro to History of Christianity	A. Angelov
R.S. 213: Intro to Hinduism	M. McLaughlin
R.S. 215: History of Religion of East Asia	K. Vose
R.S. 221: Religion and Ethics	F. Sheikh
R.S. 301: Readings in Biblical Hebrew	R. McCall
R.S. 302: Torah	R. McCall
R.S. 308: Topic: Muslim Ethics	F. Sheikh
R.S. 308: Topic: Rabbis and Fathers	M. Daise
R.S. 309: The Holocaust	M. Raphael
R.S. 310: Modern Eur Jewish History	M. Kirsh
R.S. 329: The Rabbinic Mind	M. Raphael
R.S. 346: Amer Rel State & Pol	A. Blazer
R.S. 348: African American Religions	M. Fitzgerald
R.S. 391: Theory of Religion	A. Angelov
R.S. 482: Independent Study	K. Vose
R.S. 482: Independent Study	M. Raphael

